1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

[The Island and Seafaring Greeks]

the warm morning sunshine, to watch the sailors of the numerous passenger and cargo ships work aboard ship and then relax in the tiny sea-front cafés, and to talk with the families of those whose most energetic sons are away at sea, is an introduction to a world incomprehensible to many peasants in Central and Northern Greece and strange to the inland American. For me, the best hours of all were those spent along the quay of a busy port with a retired sea captain, telling the tales of his misadventures — a 1950 version of the trials of Odysseus. All of these seafarers, fishermen, and merchant seamen, crews and captains and their island-anchored families, are a part of the rainbow in the rock. Yet they, along with the city Greeks, so similar in vitality but different in their life, make up only half of the people of Greece. The other half are rural. It is with this largest single group that we shall concern ourselves.

The Greek Villager

Being rural in Greece means living in a village, which is usually a picturesque collection of houses, lanes, gardens, orchards, vineyards, and fields. It also means that one is a peasant, since the Greek terms *choriates, chorikos,* derived from the word *choria* (village), are the closest approximations of *peasant* in the Greek language. But any Westerner, in seeking to understand the rural Greek, needs to divest himself of many false notions about the nature of a peasantry, be these on the romantic side of overidealization or on the derogatory plane of considering them mere bearers of burdens and dull plodders through life.[18]

In not all countries do peasants always live in villages, but they do in Greece. Therefore, in examining social life throughout the Greek mainland, away from the cities, we can use *villager, peasant,* and *rural population* interchangeably, feeling that if we understand Greek village life, we also shall have gained a point of comparison for the study of peasantries in other countries.

The importance of the small village in Greek life can best be shown by a few figures taken from the 1951 census. For instance, 44.6 percent — or almost half of the Greek people — lived in 5,473 communes, or local political units, of less than 2,000 inhabitants. At the other extreme was Athens, whose population included 18 percent of the nation's total; by 1961 it had reached 22 percent. Since 1940 there has been a definite drift toward Athens and the twenty other towns which in 1940 had a population of over 20,000. Despite this urban trend, one must still recognize that the small village is an imposing aspect of Greek life which deserves far more attention than it has received in the past.

Although rural people today are increasingly drawn to the city, the peasant in years past has been a man of the land, usually suspicious of city ways. And herein lies a question: are these millions of peasants, following a daily

1:Sanders Z-5,† (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

[The Greek Villager]

round of activities and so different from the city-dwelling Greek, true heirs of the classic Greek cultural heritage along with the city dweller? Are they objects for Hellenization as interpreted by the city Greeks, or are they in their own right living representatives of Greece, both past and present?

The "racial purity" of the people need not concern us here, since we are thinking of Greece as a state of mind, a political and cultural ideal, and a society organized to try to meet the needs of its members. One thing is quite clear: a sizable minority of the rural folk in Greece today still speak Albanian, Vlach, Macedonian, or even Turkish as their mother tongue.[14] Strangely enough, most of these rural families are as Greek in their loyalties, sentiments, and point of view as the Greek whose linguistic and cultural inheritance is unmixed. It might even be shown that the majority of what we call the Greek villagers, especially outside the Peloponnesos, have today been assimilated culturally rather than racially into the Greek nation. Even should this be the case, that would support the view that there is a Greek cultural reality which has had an unusual persistence through the centuries.

What does the peasant, whether agriculturist or shepherd, show us about this culture which the city Greek does not? In the first place, the peasants have always been the stable population element in the homeland. While cities rose and fell in prominence, the city Greek went far from his homeland. One hundred years ago Athens, the mother city, was only a run-down settlement, whereas many villages such as Megara, between Athens and Corinth, have been lived in continuously and even more vigorously for centuries. No matter what invading people came into Greece to settle on the land as peasants, they apparently experienced an assimilation into the Greek traditions, influencing but not imposing their own traditions on the native group. Thus there has been a cultural, even if not an altogether unmixed racial, continuity.

In the second place, the peasant has remained directly dependent on the same natural environment. In this respect he is closer to the ancient Greek than is the modern city Greek whose psychological dependence is more on the legacy of imperial Byzantium than on the Parthenon, that symbol of classic simplicity springing from the rock of Greece. It would be rash to claim that the peasant embodies the true spirit of Greece more exactly than do his fellow Greeks of city and sea, but it is fair to say that without understanding the peasant one cannot fully understand the roots and substance of contemporary Greece.

As each color of the rainbow blends into the whole spectrum, so these three groupings of people — the city dweller, seafarer, and peasant — blend into each other to form the Greek nation of today. Most of those who in recent years have increased the city population are of peasant stock; the children of the wealthy Greeks are often tended from infancy by nurses

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

marine. As of November 1957, the Greek merchant fleet numbered 541 vessels, whose tonnage totaled 1,510,535 tons. By 1961 its 1,110 ships amounted to 5,893,652 tons.

In addition to being a potential economic asset, the sea makes its influence felt in a psychological sense. "The Romans built roads but the Greeks always used the sea" was an observation made to me by a retired Greek admiral. The more one thinks about this simple statement of difference between two great nations of antiquity, the clearer become the varied bases for their greatness. Rome, the conqueror of the European continent and much of the Mediterranean world, held on to her territorial conquests for centuries, but the lasting conquests of ancient Greece were not those of territory, which she also conquered from time to time, but the victory of a superior culture. The Romans were administrators of subject lands; the Greeks became traders and merchants who colonized along the coasts of the whole known world, accumulated their wealth in cities, and maintained a competitive individualism much in evidence even today.

From this tradition of the sea the Greek has gained an outward look, sometimes carried to extremes. "He knows about every country but his own" commented a Westerner who had spent many years in Greece.

An old, old peasant put the way he felt toward the sea and what it meant to him in these words:

> "Look over the sea," he said, pointing to the shining water in the distance. "Do you know anything farther than that? Going over the sea means going over to America. In the olden days, under the pressure of need, one stole from the other and the other fought back and killed and so got out of the country. Only the goat thieves and the peasants were left. For us village people, 'farther than the sea' means not just emigrating but also means bringing in. We can use it to improve life. Here near our village we have a waterfall and big water supply; we can have electricity and irrigation but we need scientists from across the sea to tell us how to use what we have. Then more people can live on the land and will not need to emigrate."

There are many Greeks, especially women, in isolated villages who have never seen the sea. Even for them it seems to have a deep emotional meaning, for, as one Greek folklorist explained to me, there is an unconscious worship of water all over Greece. A twenty-one-year-old peasant girl on her way to relatives in Athens rode with us from her village in the heart of the Peloponnesos. This was her first trip away from home. We stopped on the brow of a mountain while she had her first view of the sea. She who had ridden with us for many miles, shy and silent, looked out to the wide indigo horizon and cried, "Thalassa! thalassa!" (The sea! the sea!), and then subsided, wide-eyed. It was obvious to all of us that she was deeply

9:Megas I,B-5,4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece EH1

342 concentrate everything around the main living space, so that all
341 rooms open to a central yard. Thus, in Crete, Cyprus, etc., apart from the double and triple blocks, we find multiple blocks, in one or two floors, which in the plan have the form of Γ or Π or sometimes T (Plate IXc 5. 6., IXd 2-5).

It is seen, from the whole examination, that the island house has not had the fine evolution of the house of continental Greece but rather remained faithful to simple forms, a legacy of the ancient times. However, in this primitive simplicity, the island house kept the beauty of simple lines and of natural forms, both the arch and the arched windows and doors giving to the cubic form of the island house a mark of pleasant contrast, especially when, as in the narrow-front house, the προστῷον is open and has an arch, instead of columns, for supporting the roof (Plate VIIIa 5). Apart from this, the regular division
[353] of the interior, the order and regularity noted in the arrangement of household furniture and utensils and the passionate love of the islanders for decoration, so that all parts of the house are fully adorned, constitute marked facts of the Greek island house.

From this summary review it is clearly seen that Greece, situated on the SE end of the European Continent and by its Islands, a neighbour of the districts of SW Asia and NE Africa, presents both the basic types of housing architecture and a variety of building forms, the proof of a long and important evolution, according to the geographical position, the nature of the ground and the long history of its civilization.

342 Greek architecture, which has its origin in the prehistoric Greek
● 174 and in general the North European house, namely the megaron (1),
341 makes its appearance in neolithic and Mycenaean times, and survives to this day in some regions with a surprisingly undiminished energy. This arhitecture has gradually perfected its ways and means of construction and improved the form of the dwelling. And first, it often deviated from the narrow to the wide-front types (2), probably for the advantages presented by a long front side,

1) **F. Behn** in Eberts Reallex. d. Vorgeschichte, 5 (1926) 186 foll. 193 **Gerda Boëtius,** Studier 1. Den Nordiska Timmerbyggnadskonsten. Stockholm 1927, pp. 25 and foll. Eldhuset eller Megarontypen.

2) This tendency for a wide front is shown by the neolithic houses (**D. Robinson** in RE Suppl. VII p. 226) According to **Fr. Oelmann,** Gnomon 1927, p. 173, on those countries neighbouring the area of flat-roof houses, and under their influence, the eagle-type house disappeared and became wide-fronted.

9:Megas I, B-5, 4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece EH1

which can easily have a wider προστῷον by a simple extension of the roof. In the beginning, it succeded in forming the outline of a farm house, consisting of one or two rooms, with an open προστῷον at the front, adapted to the natural elements (soil, climate, building materials) and to the occupation of the inhabitants, and gradually formed various types of agricultural houses. 342× 174 ● 341

This effect was possible, as it has been proved, because the προστῷον is an element capable of undergoing change(1), sometimes remaining open, and sometimes being totally or partially closed and incorporated to the main body of the house. By a continuous but organic evolution, those composite types of the modern Greek house were also formed, where the individual spaces are developed as if round the central yard, which is surrounded by a peristyle, with exactly the same method as it may be seen in the byzantine and post-byzantine monasteries and in the remains of the excavations at Olynthos, Delos and Priene.

Thus, the close relation and connection of the modern Greek house to the ancient one becomes obvious and, since the formation of the housing architecture is mainly related to the nature of the land, the study of the modern Greek houses is very profitable for the understanding of the equivalent architectural forms of ancient Greece; because, as it was very rightly stated by Franz Oelmann (Gnomon, 1927, p. 174) «the complete understanding of ancient Greek building forms, as that of any other country, is not possible without the exact knowledge of the modern popular architecture». 342× 172

Although in order to clarify the relation of the modern Greek house to the ancient one, I think it advisable to state in as brief a form, as possible, a summary of ancient house building, giving at the same time general evolutionary diagrams of the main types of building, as they are revealed by recent excavations which have contributed so abmirably to our knowledge(2).

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1) The προστῷον is very often seen in the houses of the Arian and Indo-European races, with many variations, and constitutes a basic element of the houses of this group of races (see **H. Behn,** in Eberts Reallex d. Vorgeschichte, 14 (1929) pp. 216 and foll.

2) See the article of **David Robinson** in Pauly-Kroll's RE Suppl. VII 1940, 226-276. **G. Karo** in Eberts Reallex. d. Vorgesch. 5, 202 foll. Cf. **B. Rider,** The Greek House, Cambridge 1916. **Chr. Tsountas,** Ἱστορία Ἀρχ. Ἑλληνικῆς Τέχνης, Athens 1928. **D. S. Robertson,** A Handbook of Greek and Roman

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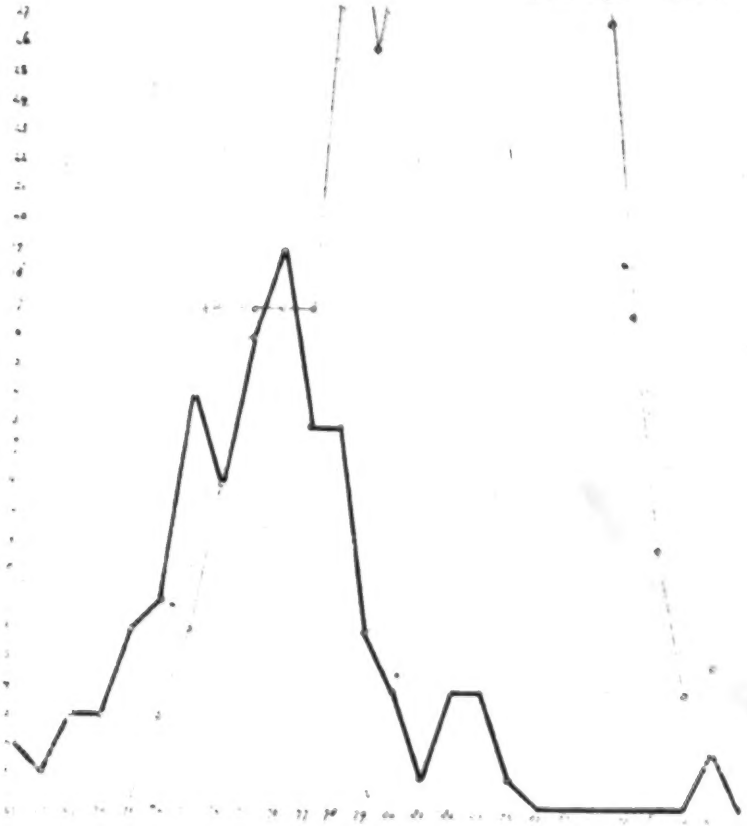

Fig. 17. The thin line gives the curve of 366 Greek heads measured by Apostolides and Stephanos and 100 measured by Duckworth. The big line gives the curve of 70 ancient (mostly helladic) Greek skull indices gathered by Stephanos plus 60 helladic and protogeometric skulls by Furst and Kumaris.

26: Kappen D-5 (1929-30) 1932 M1 Middle East

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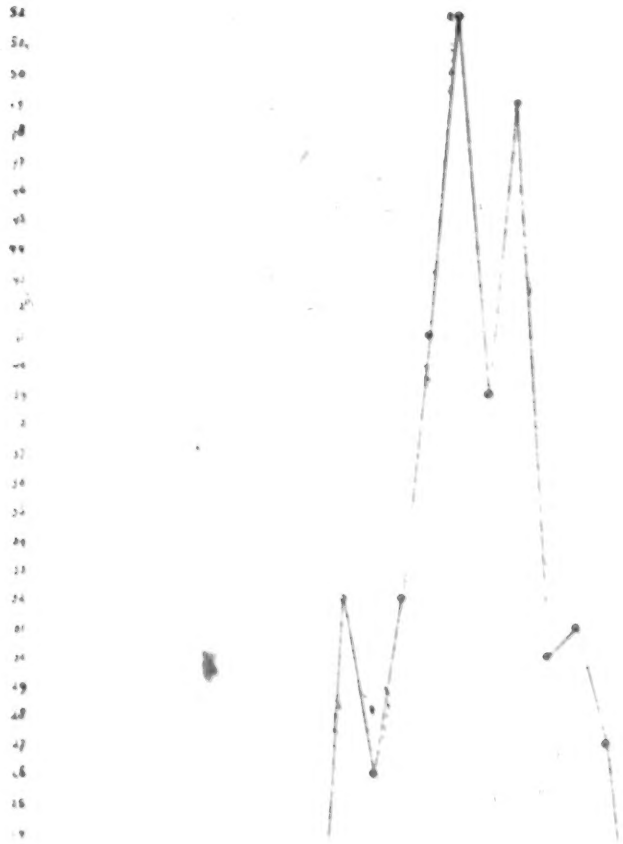

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alien origin.—This 73 index people may be represented in ancient Hellas by the 73 index peak. They may have been more numerous in Crete than in the mainland of Greece, as the average index with the ancient Cretans according to *Duckworth* is no more than 73.4[1]) (65% of the Minoan skulls being dolichocephalic, 26% mesocephalic and the rest brachycephalic).—

The mesocephalic (76) skull index group—more numerous in ancient Greece[2]) than in Crete—, may have been a different race, the more so, as according to *Furst* their burial places were also different. It is, however, very difficult to say what race this was, as on one hand the 76 skull index peak is also very outstanding with the Phoenicians (and Syrian Beduins) and on the other the living head index corresponding with this index (between 77 and 78) occurs with the mesocephalic group of the Kurds and the corresponding North Persian Iranians.—

Looking for pictures of old Minoans Dr. *Frankfort* called my attention to a similarity between the Minoan "Amorgod" (c.f. *Hall*'s Aegean Archeology Pl. 14) and one of *Von Luschan*'s Kurds. *Salaman* compared the Minoan Cup bearer to Philistine pictures. On the other hand the profile of this cup bearer resembles still more pictures of Syrian Beduin types in my possession.—

So the Iranian (Aryan) and Phoenician relations with the mesocephalic old Cretans and old Helladic population is still an open question[3]).—

As far as concerns the subbrachycephalic invasion in Greece (and Crete) which, according to Archeologists started with the Achaean invasion, but since has continually increased, there seems to exist little doubt that it brought chiefly subbrachycephalic Caucasians to this country. This may also explain Homer's frequent allusion to fair hair and blue eyes with the Achaeans. They may have entered Greece both from the North (Danube districts) and via the Ionian islands.

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According to *Ell. Smith*[4]) and *Gunther*[5]) the Achaeans formed part of a larger Ionian stock.

A later invasion was the Dorian (± 1200 B.C.). *Ridgeway*, *Hawes* and *Casson* agree that the Dorians came from the North, probably from Illyria or further North (*Casson*) from the Hallstatt regions. *Hawes* is inclined to

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1) According to *Hawes* a little higher.

2) As far as concerns Iranian elements in Greece we also have to think of the manifold historical relations with Persia.—

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3) The question may even arise if there is any racial relation between the mesencephalic Kurds and Phoenico-Aramean Semites. The prevailing blondness of the mesocephalic Kurds is a myth and among the mesocephalic Kurdish skulls photographed by *Chantre* there is at least one that closely resembles the Phoenician type. Besides, North Syria and Kurdistan are not so far apart and difference of language does not necessarily mean difference of race.—

4) *G. Elliot Smith* Human History, 1930.

5) *Günsler* Rassengeschichte des Hellenischen und Römischen Volkes, 1929.